

## A Parade, Poop, and Bare Feet

This story I'm about to tell you is a very good lesson on why you should never wear sandals in a parade, especially if you're going to be dancing.

It first began on a nice and sunny Saturday morning, a beautiful day for the Ferndale parade, sadly it was too beautiful. Everyone was baking out in the parking lot, waiting for their turn in the parade. I had to get there an hour early to be in the float for Hanna's Dance Ministry, and by float, I mean a red pick-up truck dressed in bright colored paper flowers. Hanna's Dance Ministry was a dance studio I had been going to for three years. I had just recently been to their dance camp a couple weeks before, and the dances we would be doing are from that camp. To pass the time, waiting for our turn in the parade, we would draw with chalk, practice our dances, or just sit in the shade the truck gave us, while eating Otter Pops and Goldfish crackers. Once in a while, one of our little girls would have to go to the bathroom, and we would all tag along, just to get away from the heat. My dance teacher, Miss Hanna, walked up to me, while looking down at my feet asked me why I was wearing sandals in a parade that involves dancing and walking, and not going down to the beach. I continued staring down at my worn out, but surprisingly comfortable, pink, orange, and yellow sandals, and then remembered why I didn't wear tennis shoes in the first place. My tennis shoes were uncomfortable and hard to get on; in other words, I was too lazy to put them on, and we were already going to be late. I then looked up at Hanna and told her that my sandals would work out just fine and that they were nice and comfortable to dance in. I could tell by her expression that she wasn't sure about my answer, but she then casually walked away.

One of the directors of the parade came out with a megaphone and announced that

the parade was about to start, so we packed up all our stuff and lined up in our formation we had been working on, but half an hour later, we're still there. Finally, we started moving down the line and onto the road. This was going to be an awesome day, or so I thought. Just when the fun was about to start, all the horses went ahead of us. I know it doesn't sound that bad, but when a horse eats, where does it go? Now you get the picture. Any way, we had just started our awesome dance routine if I do say so myself, when we saw.....IT! Yes! The food from the horses had finally made its exit. Miss Hanna calmly and briefly reminded us to NOT step in it, but to just dance around it. Now our dance coordination was going to be that much more difficult. The bad news for us older girls was that we had four to five little squealing girls and a baby stroller. This is why I was in the back row, making sure we didn't lose anyone and making sure no one stepped in the poop. We had just started walking and were already in a pickle.

We were almost half way through the parade and were doing well on the "Dodge the Dung Piles" game the horses had put on for us. We had about five to six more blocks to go and no one looked too tired yet. While I was dancing, I scanned the crowd for my family, who had to be here somewhere. There were a lot of people, smiling and cheering for us. It made me feel special (not that I don't feel special at home, but a different kind of special). I was doing something great for the community, and everyone appreciated it. My thoughts escaped me when I felt something was wrong with my walking. My right shoe felt weird. I glanced down and noticed that my right sandal was slightly crooked. I quickly put it back in place, and then continued dancing. But then it happened again, only this time, it was worse! I tried to fix it again, knowing it would be hard to dance like this, so I tried to ignore it. Suddenly, I felt the hot, bumpy concrete road under my foot. I quickly glanced down and saw that one of the straps had completely broken off and had left me with one useless shoe! I picked it up, making sure no one

noticed, and tried to put the strap back on, which of course, didn't work. Leaving me with no other choice, I took the other sandal off, thinking it would be weird-looking to just be wearing one shoe, and put them both on the back of the truck. I was now barefoot, dancing on the hot pavement, trying to avoid horse bombs and embarrassment. The road was hot and painful to dance on and I found myself dancing the rest of the dances on my tippy-toes.

When the parade was finally over, our group walked around the corner where the parents would come and pick you up. While waiting for my mom, I took my sandals off the back trunk and started working on that stubborn strap; trying to shove it back in the gap where it had fallen out. I saw my mom turn around the corner with my best friend, Zoie right behind her. Now I was going to have to explain the broken sandals and my burnt feet. When they finally reached me, I said goodbye to Miss Hanna and my other friends who were also there. While we were walking back to our car, I explained my barefoot dancing in the parade. The funny thing was, Zoie had also been in the parade, but in a different group, and had been wearing Dollar Store flip-flops. My mom looked over at me and said, "I did tell you to wear your tennis shoes, not those old sandals." That's the moms' way of saying "I told you so." After this event, I will never wear sandals in a parade again. I would be better off wearing uncomfortable tennis shoes than being barefoot.

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